Demand of foodgrains under PDS

2176. DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact tha the demand of the foodgrains under Public Distribution System has been lower in the first three quarters of the year 1992-93 in comparison to the demand during the corresponding period of the last year;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that inspite of the low demand, the amount of subsidy to be provided for the foodgrains is likely to be increased in comparison to the last year; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Food Subsidy

2177. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the details of food subsidy provided during last three years;

(b) what is the projection of food subsidy for 1992-93; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to reduce food subsidy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The following amounts have been released/paid by the Government of India to the FCI towards food subsidy during the last 3 years:—

Year	(Rs. in crores)
1989-90	2476 including on sugar
1990-91	2450 including on sugar
1991-92	2850

(b) During the year 1992-93, a provision of Rs. 2800 crores has been made in the Revised estimates for providing subsidy to the Food Corporation of India.

(c) Increase in food subsidy is mainly attributable to increase in procurement cost of grains, partial passing on of the increased cost to PDS consumers, increase in interest charges, increase in freight rates, wage revision etc. However, FCI has taken/has been taking steps to reduce its operational cost. Some of these steps are listed below:—

(i) Adopting a systematic policy of liquidating CAP storage, issuing old stocks, disposing of C & D category of stocks and introducing stricter supervision on movement of foodgrains to control the incidence of transit and storage shortage;

(ii) The Corporation has taken steps to promptly de-hire the storage capacity rendered surplus on account of lower level of stocks;

(iii) Recruitment to entry-level posts has been banned and the vacancies arising out of resignation, retirement etc. are not being filled up;

(iv) Procurement and movement ratio to be reduced;

(v) Maximum utilisation of storage capacity;

(vi) Reducing demurrage charges.

Wheat Shipment from U.S.

2178. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 50,000 tones wheat shipment arrived from United States was detained;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that it was infested;

(c) if so, whether any laboratory test was conducted on the samples;

(d) if so, what are the findings thereof; and

(e) what will be the fate of the shipment in case it is found to be infested?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The release of a consignment of 55,000 tonnes of U.S. wheat brought by MV 'Vitessa' at JNPT Bombay on 14-1-93 was withheld by Port Health Authorities because of their suspicion that it contained foreign matter in excess of the limit permitted under PFA Rules. On detailed sampling and analysis at Central Food Laboratory, Pune, the consignment was, however, found fully fit for human consumption and conforming to PFA standards. After having been fully satisfied with the quality, the consignment was subsequently released by the Port Authorities.

The occurence of insect infestation in foodgrain shipments under tropical and sub-tropical climatic conditions like that of our country is a common and natural phenomenon. Such consignments are fumigated with the approved fumigants at the prescribed dosage in the shipholds/transit sheds. The consignment brought by MV 'Vitessa' was also fumigated on observance of some insects and after being found fit for human consumption, the consignment has been cleared for issue for PDS.

Procurement of Wheat and Rice

2179. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) The State-wise procurement targets fixed for wheat and rice this year and the extent to which the same have been and are expected to be achieved; and

(b) the details of the comparative figures for the past three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) The procurement of wheat and paddy for the Central pool under the price support scheme being totally voluntary and the procurment of levy-rice from millers/traders being dependent on the quantum of paddy purchased by them, no targets as such can be fixed for procurement of wheat and rice.

A Statement showing State-wise quantities of wheat and rice procured during the last three marketing seasons as also in the current marketing season is given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix CLXVI, Annexure No. 43].

Production of Sugar

2180. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar production in the 1992-93 season has substantially dropped;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The production of sugar during the current 1992-93 season (Oct.-Sept.), as on 15-2-1993, was 62.66 lakh tonnes (provisional), as against 66.73 lakh tonnes upto the corresponding date in the previous sugar season 1991-92, thereby showing a decline of 4.07 lakh tonnes.

(b) The area under sugarcane this season is reported to be less than that of last season. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as weather